

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-04

ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00 OMB-01

AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 NEA-10 OIC-02 /133 W

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R 161334Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7163

INFO USDEL MTN GENEVA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, MTN, FR

SUBJ: AMB WALKER REFLECTIONS ON FRENCH ATTITUDES

TOWARD MTN

REF: GENEVA 8966

1. AMBASSADOR WALKER'S VERY ACCURATE AND PERCEPTIVE ACCOUNT IN REFTEL OF HIS MOST RECENT DISCUSSIONS IN PARIS WITH FRENCH TRADE OFFICIALS DESERVES, WE THINK, SOME ADDITIONAL COMMENT FROM THE EMBASSY PARIS PERSPECTIVE.

2. "VAST CHASM" DIVIDING U.S. AND FRENCH TRADE POLICY ATTITUDES. THE TRADITIONAL STRONG FRENCH PREFERENCE FOR A PLANNED ECONOMY AND THE EquALLY STRONG U.S. PREFERENCE FOR A FREE MARKET FREQUENTLY RESULT IN ALMOST DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE APPROACHES TO A NEGOTIATION SUCH AS THE CURRENT MTN IN GENEVA. WE DO NOT FIND IT

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DISCOURAGING, OR EVEN SURPRISING, THAT FRENCH MOTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS HAVE A DIFFERENT BASE THAN OURS.

INDEED, THE FRENCH INTEREST IN A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO THE MTN IN 1977, WHATEVER ITS MOTIVATION, STRIKES US AS AN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT. CONVERGING ON THIS COMMON GOAL FROM OPPOSITE EXTREMES MIGHT, IN THE NORMAL NEGOTIATING COURSE OF EVENTS, BE EXPECTED TO BRING US CLOSER TOGETHER. THERE CERTAINLY WILL BE DIFFERENCES, ESPECIALLY IN AGRICULTURE, JUST AS THERE HAVE BEEN MANY IN RECENT TIMES, BUT WITH THE SKILLFUL AND PERSISTENT EFFORTS OF OUR NEGOTIATORS IN GENEVA THERE HAS BEEN CONTINUED MOVEMENT TOWARD OUR OBJECTIVES. THE FACT REMAINS -- WHICH WE HAVE ALWAYS RECOGNIZED -- THAT TO BRING THE MTN TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION WILL ULTIMATELY REQUIRE SOME BASIC POLITICAL DECISIONS BY OUR LEADERS.

3. FRENCH SUSPICION AND MISTRUST. AMBASSADOR WALKER WAS ABLE TO CONFIRM ON HIS MOST RECENT VISIT WHAT WE HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY REPORTING ALMOST AD NAUSEAM -- THAT FRENCH SUSPICIONS OF U.S. PROTECTIONISM RUN DEEP. FORTUNATELY, THE USG TRACK RECORD UNDER THE TRADE ACT OF 1974 AFFORDS A SPLENDID BASIS FOR ARGUING OUR DEVOTION TO A LIBERAL TRADE REGIME. IT SOMETIMES SEEMS, HOWEVER, THAT JUST WHEN WE THINK WE HAVE ALMOST CONVINCED THEM THAT OUR HEARTS ARE TRULY LIBERAL, ALONG COMES THE THREAT OF AN ACTION (NEED WE EVEN MENTION COGNAC) OR THE ALLEGATION OF A STATEMENT BY A SENIOR USG OFFICIAL (SUCH AS THE MISLEADING ACCOUNTS OF REMARKS ABOUT OUR DETERMINATION TO UNDO THE CAP) AND WE ARE BACK AT SQUARE ONE. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE FRENCH ARE SINCERELY INTERESTED IN THE REDUCTION OF TARIFFS AND IN THE ELIMINATION OF NON-TARIFF BARRIERS.

4. INADEQUATE PREPARATION. WE CERTAINLY AGREE THAT AT LEAST SOME OF THE PERFORMANCES TO WHICH AMBASSADOR WALKER WAS EXPOSED DURING HIS MOST RECENT VISIT GAVE NO COMFORT

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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INFO USDEL MTN GENEVA

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CONCERNING THE PERFORMERS' READINESS TO APPRECIATE OR EVEN UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE FINER POINTS WHICH MUST BE APPRECIATED AND UNDERSTOOD IN THE MTN. WE HAVE NO RPT NO DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOF AND ITS MINISTRIES ARE WELL STAFFED WITH EXPERTS HAVING A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE MTN ARE ALL ABOUT, DESPITE THE ALMOST INEXPLICABLE FAILURE OF THEIR SENIORS TO REVEAL THAT.

5. NEGOTIATING PARTNER. WHILE FRENCH ATTITUDES ARE OF COURSE OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE IN THE MTN, WE FEEL CONSTRAINED TO OBSERVE THAT IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS THE EC AND NOT THE GOF IS AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE.

6. CONCLUSION. WE COME DOWN AT NO GREAT DISTANCE FROM AMBASSADOR WALKER, IN THAT WE ASSUME THAT THE FRENCH WILL CONTINUE TO BE SUSPICIOUS OF U.S. MOTIVES, JUST AS WE ARE SUSPICIOUS OF THEIRS; THAT THEY MAY MARCH TO A  
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DIFFERENT DRUM THAN OURS, BUT NONETHELESS DO WANT TO BRING ABOUT A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE MTN IN 1977; THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO PERSIST, WHILE RESISTING THE IDEA OF A SMALL PACKAGE; THAT MINISTERIAL LEVEL CONTACTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE DESIRABLE -- THOUGH A MORE INTENSIVE CULTIVATION OF THE WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALDOM WILL CONTINUE TO BE IN ORDER; AND THAT ULTIMATELY POLITICAL LEADERS WILL HAVE TO MAKE SOME BASIC DECISIONS TO INSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE MTN -- WHICH IN FRANCE, SURELY MEANS DECISIONS BY PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING AND PRIME MINISTER RAYMOND BARRE.

RUSH

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